

# Fact SHEET

## Unemployment Assistance Due to Effects of Hurricane Sandy

*Have you lost work or income due to Hurricane Sandy? If so, you may be eligible for Unemployment Insurance (UI) or Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA).*

### What is the difference?

While you likely have heard of UI benefits, you probably have not heard much about DUA.

DUA is a federal program. It provides payments to people who live or work in a federally declared disaster area and who have lost work or income due to the disaster. The federal government funds the DUA program and the NYS Department of Labor makes payments to those who qualify. DUA covers many individuals who might not be eligible for the regular UI program.

President Obama declared several counties in New York to be major disaster areas, at Governor Cuomo's request.

### Who is eligible?

Eligibility requirements for DUA are broader than for collecting regular unemployment. **We encourage anyone who is unemployed due to Hurricane Sandy to apply.**

You will most likely be eligible for regular UI. If you are not eligible for regular UI, you may be eligible for DUA. You may qualify even if you are self-employed. The Department will review your information and determine program eligibility.

If you live or work in Bronx, Kings, Nassau, New York, Orange, Putnam, Queens, Richmond, Rockland, Suffolk, Sullivan, Ulster or Westchester Counties and you lost your job or income due to Hurricane Sandy, you may qualify for DUA.

Here are some examples of circumstances that may make you eligible for either UI or DUA:

- You were injured in the disaster and are unable to work.
- Your workplace was damaged or destroyed.
- You can't get to your workplace because of the disaster.
- You were about to begin work, but could not because of the disaster.

- You are now the breadwinner or major support for a household because the former head of household died in the disaster.
- You are out of work because the federal government took over or closed the facility where you worked.
- Most of your income comes from the counties declared to be federal disaster areas and your business is down due to the disaster.

### How do I apply for DUA?

First, file for regular UI. To file for benefits:

- File online at [www.labor.ny.gov](http://www.labor.ny.gov)
- OR
- Call the NYS Department of Labor at 1-888-209-8124 or 1-877-358-5306 (if you live out of state)

Answer the questions to indicate that you lost your job or income due to Hurricane Sandy.

**If you are self-employed, you should also use the phone system to apply for benefits.**

**Deadline:** The application deadline is **February 4, 2013**. File your application with the NYS Department of Labor **as soon as possible**.

When you file for UI benefits, have the following information ready:

- Your social security number
- Your NYS driver license or Motor Vehicle ID card number (if you have one)
- Your mailing address and zip code
- A phone number where you can be reached for additional information
- Your alien registration card number (if you have one)
- The names and addresses of all employers you worked for within the 18 months prior to October 29, 2012, including any in another state

## The Self-Employed

If you are self-employed (or a farmer), you will need to provide additional information when you file for DUA benefits. Have the following information ready:

- Your 2011 income tax return
- Schedule C (line 31) *net profit or loss* (self-employed workers)
- Schedule F (line 34) *net farm profit or loss* (farmers)

If you lost these records in the disaster, apply anyway. When you apply, tell the DUA specialist that the records were lost.

You may be able to earn an income of up to \$405 per week and still collect DUA in some situations. Examples include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Businesses may qualify for DUA if their level of income is significantly reduced due to the disaster. For example, a manufacturer of goods that has a major part of its inventory destroyed may be eligible.
- Farmers who are involved in more than one aspect of farming (e.g. dairy and crops) may still be eligible for partial DUA payments.

## Will collecting DUA prevent me from cleaning or salvaging my business or farm?

Clean-up work needed because of the disaster will not disqualify an individual for DUA.

Salvaging or other limited self-employment activity alone will not disqualify an individual for DUA if he or she works less than full time and does not earn over \$405.

If salvaging results in a brief period of earnings of more than \$405 a week, then DUA would stop during that period. DUA would resume after salvaging operations end.

## Is there anything else I should know?

If you can collect regular UI benefits, you cannot receive DUA payments. The maximum weekly benefit amount for DUA and UI benefits is the same: \$405.

If you qualify for DUA, the maximum payable period is 27 weeks, beginning October 29, 2012 through May 5, 2013.

You must continue to be unemployed due to the disaster to continue receiving DUA.

## Where can I go for more information?

For questions about your claim, call our Telephone Claim Center at 1-888-209-8124 or 1-877-358-5306 (if you live out of state).

For help finding another job, visit your local Department of Labor One-stop Career Center. There is at least one in each county in the state. Our One-stop Centers can provide career counseling and help you:

- Look for a job
- Investigate training options
- Prepare a resume
- Improve your interviewing skills
- Find information about the local job market

To find your local One-stop Career Center, call 1-888-4-NYSDOL or (518) 457-9000. Or visit our web site: [www.labor.ny.gov/workforcenypartners/osview.asp](http://www.labor.ny.gov/workforcenypartners/osview.asp)

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